

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8095

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 4843

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR,I

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SUBJECT: MEXICO'S PRE-ELECTION MOOD

1. IT IS DIFFICULT FOR SOMEONE WHO HAS NOT LIVED THROUGH SUCH A PERIOD TO APPRECIATE THE TENSENESS WHICH OVERCOMES THE COUNTRY DURING THE PRE-SELECTION (REPEAT SELECTION) PERIOD. I HAVE BEEN CAUTIONED REPEATEDLY BY MEXICANS BOTH WITHIN GOVERNMENT AND OUT OF IT AS WELL AS BY FOREIGN OBSERVERS THAT THIS PREPARTUM PERIOD REQUIRES THE GREATEST TACT, DISCRETION AND RETICENCE ON THE PART OF THE UNITED STATES AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES HERE.

2. AN ILLUSTRATION MAY BE DRAWN FROM THE RECENT VISIT OF SENATOR JAVITS, TO WHOM IT HAD ORIGINALLY BEEN PROPOSED THAT HE MIGHT APPROPRIATELY VISIT BOTH MOYA PALENCIA AND CERVANTES DEL RIO AS LEADING CANDIDATES. WHEN JAVITS' SCHEDULE WAS DISCUSSED WITH FAUSTO ZAPATA, SUBSECRETARY OF THE PRESIDENCY, HE AFTER CHECKING WITH THE PRESIDENT ROSAID THAT WHILE THE PRESIDENT WOULD BE DELIGHTED TO RECEIVE SENATOR JAVITS, HE HIMSELF (AND BY INFERENCE THE PRESIDENT) THOUGHT IT WAS INAPPROPRIATE AND EVEN COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE FOR JAVITS TO CALL ON THE TWO "PRE-CANDIDATES". SUBSEQUENTLY THIS MATTER CAME TO THE FORE AGAIN WHEN THE PUBLIC RELATIONS MAN SOMEHOW CONNECTED WITH THE JAVITS VISIT AGAIN WHETTED THE SENATOR'S INTEREST IN SEEING THE "PRE-CANDIDATES". I THUS CHECKED WITH FERNANDO
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GUIITERREZ, UNDER SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR AND WHO

PRESUMABLY IS A MOYA MAN, WHILE FAUSTO ZAPATA IS A CERVANTES DEL RIO MAN, AND GOT VERY FIRM ADVICE THAT THE VISITS NOT BE MADE AS THEY WOULD GIVE RISE TO SPECULATION, WOULD LEAD TO INSINUATIONS THAT THE U.S. WAS INTERVENING IN THE SELECTION PROCESS AND WOULD BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE FOR ALL CONCERNED. FOREIGN MINISTER RABASA GAVE THE SAME ADVICE. SUBSEQUENTLY WHEN MATTER WAS RAISED STILL AGAIN BY SELL-MEANING IF ILL-ADVISED PUBLIC RELATIONS MAN, BRUNO PAGLIALI, RESIDENT CAPITALIST OF ITALIAN EXTRACTION WHO HAS BEEN INVOLVED BEHIND THE SCENES IN CERTAIN ASPECTS OF MEXICAN STATECRAFT SINCE THE 1920'S, ADVISED STRONGLY THAT SENATOR JAVITS SHOULD ON NO ACCOUNT SEEK TO SEE THE -PRE-CANDIDATES" AT THIS STAGE, POINTING OUT THAT HE AND ANY OTHER U.S. STATESMEN COULD HAVE FREE ACCESS TO WHOEVER WAS SELECTED AS THE FINAL CANDIDATE ONCE THE SELECTION PROCESS WAS COMPLETED, PRESUMABLY IN OCTOBER.

3. I STRONGLY URGE THAT THE ABOVE BE KEPT FIRMLY IN MIND BY ALL CONCERNED IN THE DEPARTMENT AND IN OTHER AREAS OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND THAT WE EXERCISE GREAT RESTRAINT IN OUR ATTITUDES, PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND OVERT ACTIVITIES REGARDING MEXICO IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS. THIS DOES NOT PRECLUDE, OF COURSE, OUR RIGHT TO SAY ANYTHING WE DEEM APPROPRIATE TO THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT IN PRIVATE AND I HAVE HAD, IN FACT, EXCEPTIONALLY FRANK DISCUSSIONS WITH A SERIES OF MEXICAN OFFICIALS AS REGARDS, FOR INSTANCE, MEXICAN ACTIVITIES ON CERDS AND RELATED POSITIONS. JOVA

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